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ABSTRACT

Texas' Select Committee on Public Education, created in 1983 by resolution of the Texas Legislature, was directed "to study the issues and continuing concerns relating to public education in Texas, particularly school finance and each of its components." The committee's recommendations, presented in this report, are intended to provide the basis for significant reform in every aspect of the state's public education system. The recommendations cover (1) the organization and management of the schools, from the state board of education and the state education agency to the local school boards, districts, and education service centers; (2) principles underlying the allocation of state funds; (3) legislative and intergovernmental action, including recodification of the Texas Education Code, support for school community guidance centers and alternative schools, provisions for discipline management programs, and factors affecting litigation; (4) teacher education, testing, and employment; (5) and regulations affecting school operations, including the school day and year, class size, the curriculum, textbooks and technology, extracurricular activities, vocational education, and education for limited English speakers, exceptional children, and preschool-age children. The report concludes with a discussion of the costs associated with the recommended reforms. (PGD)

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SELECT COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA 017 802

April 19, 1984

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Honorable Mark White
Governor of Texas

The Honorable Bill Hobby
Lieutenant Governor of Texas

The Honorable Gib Lewis
Speaker of the Texas House
of Representatives

The Honorable Bob Bullock
Comptroller of Public Accounts
of Texas

Tony Bonilla

The Honorable Joe Kelly Butler

Dr. Emmett J. Conrad

Dr. Dean Corrigan

The Honorable Will Davis

Charles William Duncan, Jr.

Dr. Jon H. Fleming

The Honorable E. R. Gregg

The Honorable Bill Haley

Susan M. Hopkins

The Honorable Grant Jones

Dr. Elizabeth MacNaughton

The Honorable Frank Madla

The Honorable Carl Parker

Ross Perot

Dr. Levi V. Perry

The Honorable Stan Schlueter

Edward Clinton Small

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The recommendations of the Select Committee on Public Education are herewith submitted to the Governor of Texas, the Texas Senate, the Texas House of Representatives and the people of Texas pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 275.

We wish to thank sincerely the hundreds of teachers, school administrators, public officials, staff, consultants, and members of the press and public whose insight, views and assistance have been indispensable to this process.

The Select Committee has endeavored to construct a new school system that will make academic achievement in Texas first in the nation and allow our children to be competitive throughout the industrialized world.

We recognize that financial limitations requires us to establish priorities and phase the implementation of our recommendations but we earnestly believe full implementation of this program will create the finest public school system in the nation.

I. THE ORIGIN AND WORK OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Select Committee on Public Education was created pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 275 by the Texas House of Representatives, with the Texas Senate concurring, in June, 1983. In the Resolution, the 68th Legislature stated its conclusion that "serious consideration and long-range planning are necessary to carry the Texas educational system into the 21st Century as a quality, effective system." It directed the Select Committee

> to study the issues and continuing concerns relating to public education in Texas, particularly school finance and each of its components -- personnel support, operating costs, transportation, equalization, minimum aid, and the categorical-aid program -- as well as the source of funding and structure of the system.

The Select Committee has taken this mandate seriously and has sought conscientiously to examine every aspect of our public education system.

To facilitate this process, we divided our work among several subcommittees:

Organization and Management, chaired by Charles Duncan

Finance, chaired by Comptroller Bob Bullock

Legislative Action and State/Federal Relations, chaired by Senator Carl Parker

Teaching Profession, chaired by Representative Bill Haley

Educating the Child, chaired by Dr. Jon H. Fleming

The following recommendations were adopted by the Select Committee:

1. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

I. State Board

A. Appointed State Board

The State Board of Education (the Board) will consist of nine members, including a chairman, appointed by the Governor with Senate confirmation for staggered six-year terms, effective September 1, 1984. The terms of three initial appointees will expire

on January 31, 1987; the terms of three initial appointees will expire on January 31, 1989; and the terms of three initial appointees will expire on January 31, 1991. In making such appointments, the Governor shall take into consideration appropriate geographic and ethnic representation.

B. State Board Authority

The Board will be given the clear responsibility and authority to set minimum statewide standards and policy for public education and direct the State school system. The Legislature will ensure that the Board has the authority and responsibility to perform these functions of policy setting and direction.

C. The Board will develop and publish a four-year plan of educational goals for the State. Every two years the Board will report to the Governor and the Legislature as to how well the plan has been met and extend its plan by an additional two years.

D. The Board will establish a strengthened accreditation process and set clear standards for local school districts. The Board will provide for intermediate sanctions for non-performing districts which do not penalize the children.

E. The Board will establish a strengthened accreditation process and set clear standards for teacher education programs. The Board will provide for intermediate sanctions for non-performing institutions.

F. The Board will set standards for time allowed and eligibility criteria for student participation in extracurricular activities in the public schools.

1. The Board will adopt rules which:

   a. Limit participation in extracurricular competition to students whose academic performance is acceptable.

   b. Limit time away from class for all extracurricular activities.

   c. Limit scheduling of events to times that do not regularly interfere with schools' academic delivery or students' preparation for class.

2. The Board will have the responsibility for approving all rules promulgated by all organizations which sponsor extracurricular activities and will in addition approve the rules of censure or penalties for school personnel who allow rule infractions. The Board's function will be one of approval or rejection, but not modification of the rules.

G. The Board will direct local school districts to submit an annual, public performance report.

H. Management and Financial Report

The Board shall amend the uniform chart of accounts and develop and implement a management and financial reporting system which will ensure the availability of meaningful cost accounting, financial and management information at the state, district and campus levels. Such information will include, but not be limited to, data needed to

monitor the funding process, data on total educational system costs at all levels, and data regarding cost and teacher ratios by individual course and by program.

I. The Board will direct the institutions which prepare teachers to submit an annual, public performance report.

J. The Board will continue to evaluate and adjust curriculum requirements as needed to respond to changing educational needs.

K. The Board will change, with authorization from the Legislature, the rules for employment and assignment of duties of vocational teachers to conform to the rules for all other teachers. The changes would allow districts to enter into 10, 11 or 12 month contracts with all teachers alike and provide flexibility in the class assignments of vocational teachers.

L. The Board should be concerned with improving the quality, and economy in textbook selection. The Committee also recommends that the selection cycle be shortened to six years.

M. The qualifications for Commissioner of Education will be changed to make consideration of all qualified educators possible, and remuneration should be adequate for the responsibilities. The annual salary of the Commissioner of Education should be comparable to the salary of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

N. The Commissioner of Education will serve at the pleasure of the Board.

O. The Board will direct the Commissioner of Education to reorganize the Texas Education Agency (the Agency) and take such steps as

necessary to provide for a strengthened accreditation process and other changes as listed in the following section of this report. The Committee intends to provide specific organizational recommendations developed in concert with the Agency and others.

P. University Interscholastic League

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) will be placed under the supervision of the Board. To accomplish this goal, the Board will be substituted for the University of Texas in the governance of the UIL. This means that the Board will appoint the members of the UIL State Executive Committee. The University of Texas will continue to provide the administrative and facility support to the UIL, if this is acceptable to The University. The self-governing aspects of the UIL in relation to contest rules will not be changed.

II. Texas Education Agency

A. The Agency will strengthen the accreditation process, giving emphasis to the quality of learning. An enhanced process will include the following actions:

1. Emphasize quality of learning that is occurring in each district and on each campus. This process would include the use of test scores which indicate trends in performance.
2. Review the quality of the process for evaluation of teachers and administrators.

3. Review the effectiveness of principals as instructional leaders.

4. Strengthen financial audit through selected management audits and a periodic review of costs by campus.

5. Perform an accreditation review for each local school district at least every three years, and more frequently where problems or weaknesses have been identified.

6. Have the accreditation team report verbally and in writing to each local school district board and to selected campuses as appropriate.

7. Review curriculum and delivery to ensure that State minimums are met.

8. Review the effectiveness of programs for special education and special populations.

9. Relate student performance on standardized tests to grades received.

10. Assess the quality of in-service training provided.

11. Obtain input from campus administrators, teachers and the community (parents) in accreditation investigation.

12. Review paperwork demands imposed on and by the districts and others.

13. Suggest remedial actions, improvements, or sources of help (i.e., education service centers) as appropriate.

14. Provide for a strengthened accreditation process for the teacher education programs as well as for the local school districts.

B. The Agency will direct its accreditation personnel to be alert for overall educational system problems (such as curriculum) and to report these problems to others within the Agency who are responsible for research and planning. Also, the Agency will be prepared to provide assistance for local school boards who have difficulty in delivering minimum State programs.

C. The Agency will implement the following revised intermediate sanctions for local school boards who do not meet State accreditation standards.

1. Notification to administrators and an accreditation committee of the local board.
2. Public notification to the local board.
3. Appointment of a monitor who will join with the board in its activities.
4. Appointment of a master who will administer the affairs of the district.
5. Non-accreditation and removal of State funds from the district.

The progression from one level of sanction to another will be contingent largely on the responsiveness of the local board and district in correcting problems.

D. The Agency will implement the following revised sanctions for teacher education programs that do not meet State Board standards.

1. Notification to administrators and a committee of the governing board.

2. Public notification to the board of the institution.

3. Limitation of the number of students enrolled if a program is to remain accredited.

4. Non-accreditation of the program.

E. The Agency will develop plans and suggestions for campus oriented parental participation in all districts. Organizational forms, such as campus advisory boards (without governance authority), will be considered along with other schemes which develop communication with individual parents and encourage their participation.

F. The Agency will develop options for non-delivery or changing districts which will include:

1. Models for administrative and instructional cooperatives

2. Models and financial arrangements for K-6, K-8 feeder districts

3. Models which will preserve a local campus and local oversight if districts are consolidated

G. The Agency will develop a plan indicating where some of the above options or other alternatives should be used to optimize the administrative structure of the State school system. The study should consider the following:

1. Which districts are candidates for change and which would benefit?

2. What is a logical district size considering educational needs as well as efficiency, curriculum requirements,

the accreditation process, the need for community elementary schools, new funding formulas, etc?

3. What factors impact on the local community such as political issues, infringement on local control, the effect on employment, the need for new facilities, etc?

4. What is the effect of differential tax rates?

5. Factors other than size that affect educational effectiveness should be considered.

The Agency will be prepared to work with local boards in planning change in status such as consolidation, where appropriate. The Commissioner will report to the Board a list of districts in which delivery or other problems exist and the status of local planning efforts to effect change. The Board would then make recommendations as appropriate to the Legislature.

H. The Agency will assume a leadership role through research and innovation in instructional methods which will include:

1. Use of satellites and other technological alternatives to current training and instructional methods.

2. Re-training models for teachers and administrators.

3. Use of laboratory schools by research and development group.

4. The need for training in the appraisal process.

5. Dialogue with schools of education which encourages use of laboratory schools and pilot programs.

6. Making available to local school districts an instrument for gaining staff feedback on the management process.

7. Central information system design for the education system.

Developments by the Agency should be passed to the education service centers and cooperative teacher education centers to enhance their other training programs.

I. Within a year the Agency will report to the Board on the status of teacher and administrator in-service training and continuing education, giving consideration to the following:

1. How effective the present programs are and what changes should be initiated by the education service centers, the schools of education, and local districts?

2. How well the needs are being met for training in new curriculum requirements or appraisal methods?

3. Feedback from the accreditation process or from individual teachers and administrators.

4. The relationship of current college and school district training educational activities to the requirements of the new career ladder, and whether these training activities should be reduced or modified.

The Board will then make recommendations to the Legislature as appropriate.

J. The Agency will reorganize to establish a strengthened, independent division for Accreditation and Audit, and include financial audit in this division. In addition the Agency will:

1. Revise organization for occupational education to follow the model for other programs.
    a. Reduce or phase out field offices and transfer responsibility for technical assistance to the education service centers.
    b. React to job market changes in Agency staff composition.
2. Provide for system cost analysis.
3. Provide for a strengthened research and planning function.

K. The Agency will conduct a classification study to consider the proper salary grades for newly created and changed positions within the Agency.

L. The Agency will make a review of reporting systems, emphasizing control of paperwork and management information for the Board, including:
    1. Develop a district model paperwork system through a continuing study of reports and information requests.
    2. Initiate a process to develop a management reporting system, including the following steps:
        a. Determine information needed (with Board) to monitor the funding process or to meet other management needs.
        b. Provide information on educational system costs.

c. Revise accounting or develop sampling methods to provide data required.

d. Develop model of accounting required by each district to provide costs by campus and program, teacher ratios for core and other programs, and other data needs of the district and the Agency.

The Agency will develop the format for the annual reports of the local school districts and the teacher education programs. Items to be covered in the report of the local school districts are listed in the next section of this report. The report for the teacher education programs should cover such things as statistics on students admitted to the teacher education programs including performance percentages on the pre-professional skills test, information regarding admissions to student teaching, statistics on students completing the program including performance on the exit test, employment success of graduates, and report on the use of State funds. The Committee intends to provide specific format recommendations developed in concert with the Agency and selected institutions which prepare teachers.

III. Local School Boards

A. The board of the local school districts will be required to provide an annual performance report to the public and to the Board. This report would emphasize educational performance as well as cost information, including such items as:

1. Education quality
2. Scores on tests with national norms
3. Goalr and objectives
4. Performance trends of individual campuses to reflect improvement or lack thereof at that campus
5. Costs by campus and for central administration
6. Attendance data, dropout rates
7. Report on discipline
8. Turnover, number of employees, trends in employment by employee type
9. Paperwork reduction effort
10. Teacher ratios for core, other programs
11. In-service training and continuing education received by superintendents, administrators and teachers and comments on the effectiveness of this training
12. Board member training received

The Committee intends to provide specific report format recommendations developed in concert with the Agency and local school districts.

B. The local board will set policy, not act as administrators. They should act as a unit, not as individuals.

C. All school board members will be required to receive training and orientation. This training and orientation will be:

1. Required of all new school board members in preparation for their duties.

2. A uniform program for Statewide use.

3. Provided by service centers, the Texas Association of School Boards, or other entities approved by the Agency.

D. A local school board will be required to use monies received for instructional purposes as specified.

IV. School Districts

A. The principal of a school will serve in fact as the instructional leader and will be provided with adequate training and personnel assistance to enable him/her to assume this role. The principal will organize the leadership structure within each school by using senior and master teachers, as well as other administrators to develop instrumental teams. The qualifications for principal certifications should be sufficiently flexible for an outstanding teacher to qualify by substituting approved experience and professional training for portions of the present educational requirements. Supervised and approved on-the-job experience in addition to required internship will be accepted in lieu of classroom hours. Competency testing will be required of administrators to the extent that it is required of teachers.

B. Extend all principal contracts to 11 or 12 months to insure that adequate planning and preparations are possible.

C. The superintendent will be the administrative manager of a district as well as the educational leader. The qualifications for superintendent certification should be sufficiently flexible to allow

an outstanding educator to qualify by substituting approved experience and professional training for portions of the present educational requirements.

D. Emphasis will be placed on improvement of management skills of the principal and the superintendent. Selected management training or experience will be credited for qualification for principal or superintendent. Some in-service training and continuing education should be required and should emphasize the methodology for instructional leadership and teacher evaluation. Continuing education programs should be planned by the individual administrator in concert with supervisors. Programs should be flexible and draw from a variety of offerings in the State and the Country.

E. Each local district will emphasize instructional excellence and its delivery. Each district will:

1. Monitor change in performance trends by campus.
2. Prepare annual performance report as mandated by the Board, with supplementary analysis as required for the local board.
3. Encourage local advisory boards at schools for parental participation.

F. The district should emphasize campus control and authority of the principal. Each principal will:

1. Participate in the selection of teachers for his/her campus.
2. Set specific education objectives for his/her campus, involving staff in the planning process.

3. Develop budgets for his/her campus.

4 Work with all professionals to prepare individual development plans.

G. Proper school management practices must include a process whereby teachers selected by their peers can be assured that their professional judgment and opinion will be solicited and respected in decisions about educational practice and professional standards at the local level.

H. Selected principals will periodically give a verbal report to the local board.

V. Education Service Center

A. Use of the educational service center as a facility to assist in curriculum development will be encouraged.

B. The education service center will act in an advisory, service role. The service role, which has been effective in the past, will include:

1. Preparation for and help after accreditation
2. Training and re-training for teachers and administrators
3. Assistance in development of funding
4. Assistance in special education and other special population programs
5. Occupational education delivery or planning functions
6. Development of cooperative ventures
7. Direct education of students on behalf of a group of participating districts
8. Training of school board members

9. Administrative record-keeping for some districts

C. The education service center should not act in an auditor or accreditor role. Accreditation will remain the role of the Agency.

D. Each service center will receive adequate base level funding from the State.

E. Service centers will coordinate with the Texas Education Agency and other regions on services to be provided and share innovative ideas with each other. Teachers and administrators within one region should be free to attend the training programs within another region as all regions will not be able to offer programs to meet all needs.

F. The service centers will maintain their present independent form.

VI. Other Issues

A. The salary scale for administrators must be considered in conjunction with the salary scale for teachers. Other career considerations for administrators must also be taken into account.

B. The Committee recommends a code of conduct for parents, agreement to which would be acknowledged by enrollment of their children in the public schools.

C. There should be a plan for a follow-up audit or reporting on the progress made in the implementation of recommendations of the Select Committee on Public Education.

VII. Endorsements

The Committee endorses the following recommendations of the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association:

A. The State must provide more personnel for elementary schools and require school districts to use funds in larger proportions at the elementary level.

B. The State must adopt maximum class size for the early years of education.

C. The State should establish higher standards for staffing and funding of elementary schools.

D. The three-month "summer vacation" for students should be reduced.

E. Parent commitment should be increased.

F. Academic achievement should be required for extracurricular participation.

G. A principal, unless afforded additional support, should evaluate less than twenty teachers annually.

H. The Agency should institute a study of the campus achievement goals.

I. Elementary school principals should be provided continuous mid-management training.

2. FINANCE

I. The allocation of state education funds to Texas public schools will be equalized, streamlined and based on a calculation of what it actually costs to provide a basic, quality education, in accordance with the following funding principles:

A. State dollars should be sent to local school districts on a per student (ADA) basis through a basic grant system. A personnel unit system or salary schedule should not be used as mechanisms for delivering state dollars to school districts.

B. The basic grant should be funded by the Legislature based on an overall state percentage share of a quality basic educational program, including transportation, as defined by annually-updated accountable costs. State mandated changes in salary levels for any school personnel must be considered accountable costs.

C. A state percentage share of the additional accountable costs required to provide special educational services above the basic educational program should be funded by the Legislature.

D. The method by which all educational program and service costs are accounted should be specifically defined in statute. Adjustments for price differences in program and service costs among districts should be made whenever possible and appropriate.

E. All actual state dollars received by local school districts for the basic educational program, special educational services and transportation should be directly dependent on each district's property wealth per student (ADA). School districts whose wealth per student is above the statewide average should receive proportionately fewer state dollars than school districts whose wealth per student is below the statewide average.

F. For districts with wealth per student (ADA) below the statewide average, an equalized state enrichment grant should be available. The amount of the total grant should be fixed by the Legislature. Districts qualifying for equalized state enrichment money would receive an amount proportionate to the district's total effective tax effort (M & O plus I & S) up to a maximum of the statewide average total effective tax effort.

G. For purposes of distributing state funds, the state should use current property values reported by local districts with the Commissioner of Education adjusting values to ensure uniformity and consistency. Such values should be subject to audit by the State Property Tax Board and final adjustment by the Commissioner of Education. The Legislature should fund the SPTB at the level deemed necessary to guarantee the adequacy and accuracy of the ratio studies required to accomplish this goal.

H. The Legislature should consider revising the State's truth-in-taxation laws to remove from the calculation of effective tax rates (for the 3% and 8% limits) those tax increases which might be required to comply with state or federal equalization standards established by law, including the local share of program costs, or to meet tax effort criteria for full entitlement to state funds.

3. STATE/FEDERAL RELATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION

I. Recodification Of The Texas Education Code, as required.

Recommendation:

A. Establish an advisory committee under the Texas Legislative Council that would be responsible for reviewing and recommending revisions and recodification of the Texas Education Code.

B. The Legislature should authorize the publication of a manual which contains all state laws which relate to education. The manual shall contain the Education Code with an appendix for all related state laws.

II. School Community Guidance Centers/Alternative Schools.

Recommendation:

A. Maintain current program with an increase in state appropriations and amend the statute to increase the number of schools eligible for the program. School districts shall count the students served in the school community guidance center program for ADA purposes.

B. The Agency should review the training requirements for personnel located at the centers and establish standards for training and delivery of services to ensure program effectiveness. The Agency shall monitor the programs and require additional inservice or other training as necessary.

C. Upon enrollment in a guidance center/alternative program, the district, parent and student shall develop a "contractual agreement" that specifies responsibilities of both parent and student to include:

1. student behavioral and learning objectives;
2. parent required attendance at specified meetings/conferences for teacher review of student progress;
3. parent written acknowledgement of understanding and accepting outlined responsibilities to attend conferences and to meet other objectives as defined by the district to aid student remediation;
4. district superintendent authority to seek a district court order requiring parental compliance with the contractual agreement, enforced with court power of contempt.

III. Discipline Management Programs In Public Schools.

Recommendation:

A. The Agency shall review and approve a variety of discipline management programs to be implemented by school districts. School districts shall adopt an Agency approved discipline management program by 1986. An approved discipline management program shall include but not be limited to:

1. Commitment, cooperation, and involvement of school district administrators, teachers, parents and students in the program development.

2. Development of a Student Code of Conduct that is clearly defined and enforced. This Code shall establish district expectations and provide for the specific consequences for violation. This Code shall at least contain the provisions established under the Attorney General's Code of Conduct in 1980.

3. Designation of the person(s) in each school with specific training for discipline management implementation and program assessment, and for the specific identification and referral of students for alternative school/community guidance centers.

4. Encouragement of the Regional Education Service Center for assistance in the development of appropriate discipline management and inservice training for the district.

5. Parental responsibility as an integral part of the discipline management program, and specifically outlined roles and

responsibilities for parent, student, and administration such that school districts shall require:

a. the presence of a parent or guardian to enroll a student in each school year;

b. a minimum of two parent/teacher conferences during the school year;

c. parent training workshops for home reinforcement of student study skills and specific curriculum objectives;

d. written acknowledgement by the parents that they understand and accept all of the above.

B. The Agency shall assist school districts in the development of discipline management programs by recommending specific training programs available at institutions of higher education such as the Southwest Texas Discipline Training Institute.

C. The Agency shall monitor the enforcement of an approved discipline management program through the accreditation process. The Agency shall make specific recommendations for improvement in a district's discipline management program and establish procedures for follow up.

D. The teacher performance evaluation process required for career ladder implementation shall include specific measures for evaluating discipline management procedures used by the classroom teacher.

E. School districts shall verify to the Agency by year 1986 that every teacher in the district has received specific training in the approved discipline program. This training shall occur either through inservice

or other special instructional arrangement by the district. School districts shall use inservice programs to reinforce teacher training in discipline management.

IV. Frivolous Lawsuits.

Recommendation:

A. Create a statute which will allow the district court judge to award attorney's fees in a lawsuit against a teacher, school administrator, school board or school district when the subject matter of the lawsuit involves discipline and the judge has determined in his discretion that the grounds of the lawsuit are frivolous. This statute will not affect lawsuits brought under federal law, only those brought under state law.

B. We further recommend that the Select Committee on Public Education communicate with the Texas delegation in the United States Congress our recommendations regarding frivolous lawsuits concerning discipline matters. We recommend that a similar statute be created at the federal level.

C. We recommend that the Select Committee on Public Education as a whole put together a package of federal laws which adversely impact education in Texas and forward the laws and our recommendations for change to the Texas delegation of the U.S. Congress.

V. Special Court System To Expedite School Law Cases.

Recommendation:

A. We find that there is an inordinate delay in the present legal process relating to education matters, particularly disputes regarding

employment matters with teachers. We recommend an in-depth study of both the judicial and administrative systems with specific recommendations for improvements by the next full legislative session. We endorse the concept of an appointment of special masters to hear education related disputes. Any recommended system shall include this concept. Any plan recommended shall expedite the resolution of disputes while maintaining full due process rights for all parties.

VI. Recommendation Regarding The Elimination Of The Spoils System Practiced By Some School Districts.

Recommendation:

A. Establish a resolution to be introduced in the next regular session of the Texas Legislature directing the House and Senate Education Committees to conduct a thorough investigation as to the incidence of the spoils system in public schools and the implications of favoritism based on factors other than professional qualities and competencies. The Joint Committees shall develop recommendations and report them at the next session of the Legislature.

VII. Recommendation Regarding The Elimination Of Unnecessary Steps In Employee Dispute Appeals.

Recommendation:

A. The Legislature shall authorize appeal of the Commissioner of Education's decisions regarding employee disputes to be appealed directly to the district court bypassing review of the Board.

4. TEACHING PROFESSION

I. Teacher Education

A. The Board shall establish rigorous standards for evaluating schools of education in Texas. Schools of education not meeting these standards shall be placed on probation for 24 months. The number of graduates from a school on probation shall be significantly reduced. All graduates must pass the tests required for certification prescribed by the Board. If at the end of 24 months these deficiencies have not been corrected, the right to recommend applicants for certification shall be terminated. The fact that the school is on probation shall be a matter of public record and placed in the catalogue of the college or university. All teacher education programs may submit to evaluation and accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

B. Establish merit-based fellowship/scholarship and scholar loan programs to attract the most capable high school graduates into teacher education.

C. Increase the Coordinating Board's formula for allocating funds to colleges of education to make it equal to the rate provided other professional programs and eliminate the disincentives for offering courses on site.

D. Create a fund for excellence to support research and development in teaching and teacher education with contributions from individuals, foundations, industry and business as well as federal and state appropriations. The Board shall be responsible for establishing research priorities and administering this fund.

E. Support continuing education for teachers and provide training for teachers changing to fields where shortages exist.

F. Each school of education in the State of Texas shall operate a public school under the direction of the local school board of that district to provide the maximum practical exposure to students and professors of the problems of successfully teaching and managing public schools.

G. All of the quality assurances and requirements recommended by this Committee shall be applicable to persons seeking certification to teach in Texas who have not completed an approved program for teacher training in Texas.

H. Legislative action should be taken to attract to the teaching profession substantial additional numbers of outstanding recent graduates and experienced professionals through alternate certification programs both inside and outside the colleges of education. Such statewide, uniform programs will require potential teachers to:

1. meet high academic standards, including all tests and examinations required of persons certified pursuant to recommendation of colleges of education;

2. satisfactorily complete a one-year internship in a public school under supervision of an experienced teacher preceded by a period of monitored student teaching in which competence to work with children is demonstrated; and

3. satisfactorily complete a battery of psychological tests prescribed by the Board and (i) 24 weeks of intensive

instruction in teaching methods, child or adolescent development, and classroom management and discipline for grades preK-6 or (ii) 12 weeks of like intensive instruction for grades 7-12. Such instruction shall be managed by the local school districts and/or regional education service centers and primarily staffed by master classroom teachers and/or qualified college faculty where appropriate.

II. Career Ladder

The current state salary schedule, under which salaries are determined based on longevity and advanced degrees alone, will be replaced with a viable performance and evaluation-based Career Ladder Program. Such a Career Ladder Program will provide a professional career development path for outstanding teachers and ensure that such teachers receive the recognition, respect, and financial rewards which they deserve.

The Career Ladder shall include the following elements:

1. There shall be four Career Ladder levels with required minimum salaries for teachers at each level.
2. Criteria for advancement from one Career Ladder level to another shall include comprehensive and fair evaluations of actual teacher performance, teaching experience, completion of approved advance course work in the subject matter taught and/or job-related in-service programs and/or job-related professional studies in colleges and universities. Comprehensive examinations administered on a statewide

basis shall be one of several criteria for advancement to the highest level. It shall not be necessary for any teacher to complete course work, other than courses required by statute or by rule of the Board, in colleges of education in order to qualify for advancement. However, if the professional study is job-related and of high quality, it should be considered.

3. Starting salaries, fringe benefits and retirement benefits shall be sufficient to attract capable people to the teaching profession, and salaries, fringe benefits and retirement benefits at each Career Ladder level shall be sufficient to provide an incentive for the best teachers to remain in the classroom.

4. Performance evaluation shall be the responsibility not of any individual, but of a team of administrators and professional teachers. All of the individuals participating in the evaluation process shall be specially trained through a uniform statewide program to perform the evaluation objectively and knowledgeably.

5. Failure of a teacher to meet job expectations, as determined by evaluations, shall be grounds for nonrenewal of the teacher's contract.

6. Teachers shall be consulted extensively in the development of the detailed provisions with respect to the elements set forth above.

III. Teacher Compensation

The minimum beginning salary for teachers should be at least $1,520/monthly.

IV. Teacher Testing

All Texas public school children must be taught by teachers who possess basic and essential academic skills and knowledge of the subject matter which they teach. The Committee recognizes that the great majority of Texas teachers have skills and knowledge far above minimum acceptable levels. The Committee recommends that legislative action be taken to provide for a testing program to ensure that all teachers of public school children possess such skills and knowledge.

The testing program will include the following elements:

1. The Agency shall develop or adopt and validate a series of tests of basic professional skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics, and of subjects taught in the core curriculum, that shall be constructed so as to be fair. Such tests shall be administered by or under supervision of the Agency on a statewide basis under circumstances which shall ensure that all persons taking each test have a fair and substantially equal opportunity to achieve a passing score.

2. As soon as practicable, but no later than the 1985-86 school year, all teachers and administrators in the Texas public schools shall be required to offer one-time evidence of basic professional skills and subject matter knowledge of the subjects taught at the level taught by means of: (i) an

acceptable score on the basic professional skills and applicable subject matters tests as prescribed by the Board and the Agency, or (ii) an acceptable score on alternate tests approved by the Board. Acceptable scores on all tests will be determined by the Board. The tests as described will be interfaced with the performance evaluation system.

3. The Agency and local districts will provide opportunities for advance preparation for all tests, and for any remedial work necessary to improve skills or knowledge levels. Multiple opportunities to pass each test will be provided.

4. Persons who fail to achieve an acceptable score on a subject matter test will not be permitted to teach that subject until an acceptable minimum score is received, absent establishment by a local district of an emergency need. Persons who fail to achieve an acceptable minimum score in basic academic skills tests will not have their existing contracts renewed upon expiration.

5. Successful completion of any test shall not be substituted for any performance evaluation as defined in the Career Ladder.

6. Teachers will be consulted extensively in the development of the details of this testing program.

5. EDUCATING THE CHILD

I. School Day/School Year

A. School facilities should be made available Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., during the school year.

B. The traditional school day of seven hours, including adequate lunch and rest periods, for students in pre-kindergarten to middle school shall be devoted to academic learning. After school time should be devoted to voluntary extracurricular activities and mandatory tutorial assistance for those who need extra help with their school work.

C. The traditional school day of seven hours, including an appropriate lunch period, for students in middle school through grade 12 shall be devoted to academic learning. After school time should be devoted to voluntary extracurricular activities and mandatory tutorial assistance for those who need extra help with their school work.

D. School districts should set policy to limit interruptions and distractions during the academic time period. Teachers shall be provided adequate time to prepare for instruction of the curriculum without interruption from other activities and shall be provided time to engage in other classroom responsibilities such as reviewing and grading assigned homework.

E. Each school district should provide for not less than 185 days of instruction for students. A common school calendar should be adopted state-wide. School should start on the first Tuesday after Labor Day. The Board should conduct a study to determine the

advantages of increasing the number of school days to 220 for implementation over a five-year period.

II. Class Size

Pre-kindergarten through grade 4 classes should comprise no more than 15 students. All class sizes should be a function of subject and teaching methodology. Teaching strategy should allow for individual instruction as needed.

III. Academic Programs

A. The definition of basics should include not only reading, writing and arithmetic, but also higher order thinking skills and scientific and technological literacy. Curriculum development reflecting these basics is urged.

B. School districts should provide an optional pre-kindergarten grade education for children beginning at age 4. Compulsory school attendance should begin at age 5. The state should fund full day kindergarten for the full academic school year for all children in public schools in the state of Texas to the same extent it funds programs in other grades.

C. Measure progress by individual accomplishment.

D. Students will not be exempted from final examinations.

E. Advanced Placement/Credit by Examination

1. A student in grades 1-5 should have the opportunity for advanced placement based on examination. Advancement could be allowed if: (1) the student passed all sections of a Board-approved test at or above the

ninetieth percentile, (ii) such action was recommended by a school representative, and (iii) approved by the parent/guardian.

2. Students in the secondary grades should have the opportunity to receive credit by examination for any approved academic course. Comprehensive examinations should be prepared by the school districts under Board guidelines and passage should reflect mastery of the course. A grade of 90 or higher should be required on the examination for a student to be granted credit and the examination grade should be entered on the student's transcript.

F. Limited English Proficiency

1. The Texas English Proficiency program exists to provide full opportunity for all students to become competent in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending the English language, thereby facilitating their integration into the regular school curriculum of the state of Texas.

2. To this end, the Subcommittee 1) supports full implementation of S.B. 477 (67th Legislature) and 2) recommends ongoing evaluation of the Texas English Proficiency program and that the findings of that evaluation be presented to the Legislature one month prior to the beginning of each regular session. The

report will include information on the progress of the program toward preparing limited English proficiency students to enter the mainstream of education and recommendations to facilitate achieving the program's goals.

G. Exceptional Children

The State has a responsibility to provide an appropriate public education to eligible special education students, gifted as well as handicapped. All students should be challenged by the public education system to the limits of their academic abilities. Early identification of these special populations is strongly advised. Exceptional children should be provided with appropriately designed programs which meet their special needs and State funding should be provided to meet the needs of these programs. Insofar as possible, the special education programs and students should be a part of the mainstream of the educational experience. Administrative rules and regulations at all levels should be reviewed regularly to assure program objectives are being satisfied with a minimum of regulatory burden and in the most efficient manner possible.

H. Vocational and Distributive Education

School Districts will have the authority to offer vocational and distributive education courses as electives, but such electives will receive no special state financial support.

The role of the public education system is to provide students the opportunity to achieve basic educational objectives and thereby establish a sound foundation for pursuing career objectives. Public education's role in occupational/career education should be to provide work orientation and career exploration opportunities in an academic setting as a foundation to job skills training.

1. Every vocational education program should have a Sunset provision every four years.
2. Approval of new programs should be tied to high-demand occupations.
3. Where appropriate school districts should be encouraged to contract with Junior Colleges and Community Colleges to provide vocational education programs to eliminate duplication of programs, facilities and expenses.
4. Vocational education teachers should teach nonvocational education subjects in which they are certified or be used in other capacities.
5. Use of vocational education facilities for nonvocational programs should be encouraged.
6. Enrollment of thirty (30) students should be necessary to initiate a vocational education program, and twenty (20) students should be necessary to sustain the program.

I. Annualized Testing

1. All students will take annual achievement tests, selected by the Board, to measure their progress. Test results will be reported by grade and campus in each local district's Annual Report. Students in bilingual education programs will be tested in both languages used in instruction.

2. Districts should be required to make remedial programs available as necessary.

3. The State should require school districts to provide tutorial services, at the school, to a student failing a single unit of any subject at any time during the school year. Students having a grade below 70 in a class should be required to attend tutorials offered after the academic time period.

IV. Curriculum

The Board will act to further improve the educational program for the children of Texas through transition from the current curriculum, and the curriculum recently approved by the Board, to a single course of study after an appropriate phase-in period.

V. Extracurricular Activities

A. Extracurricular activities shall not be scheduled during the academic block of the school day. The Board and local districts shall make every effort to schedule extracurricular activities on the weekend. The Board and local districts shall make every effort to free the school nights of Monday through Thursday for study and homework.

B. Extracurricular activities should not be scheduled during the week of semester final examinations. School districts shall prohibit extracurricular activities the week prior to semester final examinations.

C. Students participating in extracurricular and other activities must maintain a passing grade of 70 or higher in all subjects.

D. To be awarded credit for a course, a student should not be absent from any class or course period to participate in any activity (extracurricular or other) more than ten times during the academic year or more than five times during any one semester, when such events cannot be scheduled on the weekends. Attendance for less than the full class period should be counted as an absence and a grade of 70 or higher should be required to be awarded credit. It is expected that appropriate regulatory bodies and agencies should carefully monitor this policy's implementation and that no exemptions or exceptions be granted.

E. Competitive sports activities in the middle and junior high schools should be limited and a well-organized intramural program should be implemented throughout all districts in the State of Texas.

VI. Early Childhood Education

Providing for the developmental needs and early learning experiences of children, beginning at birth, is vital to their future educational success. Academic achievement has its foundation in quality early childhood care and education.

A. Efforts to improve the quality and availability of early childhood care and education programs should be encouraged and supported. State agencies, child care specialists and educators should reassess early childhood education and child care in our State and develop standards of quality which will provide appropriate learning experiences for children. Special attention should be given to the qualifications of early childhood teachers and caregivers and the availability of programs for their development and training.

B. The State should require implementation of appropriate learning programs as a part of the licensing procedure for child care facilities which will provide an improved base for academic achievement in later years. The State should develop minimum learning program standards for child care facilities which not only assure minimum quality of care but also relate to appropriate learning experiences, staff qualifications, and lower staff-to-child ratios to aid the child to enter school as well prepared as possible. A training program utilizing certified teachers of young children as instructors of child care workers could support the worker training effort at the cost of the child care centers.

C. Additionally, the State should mandate that public schools be required to provide parenthood education to all parents of potential students beginning at birth of the child (parental participation in these programs is optional).

VII. Textbooks

A. Administrative procedures shall provide for a full and open debate of all sides of all issues brought before the Textbook Committee. All major intellectual currents of thought should be included in textbooks as the literary base for free inquiry and discussion.

B. Rigorous textbooks and materials of the highest quality shall be selected.

C. Consideration should be given to a four-to-six-year adoption cycle.

D. Once textbooks and other instructional materials are approved by the State Textbook Committee, they should be removed only by a majority vote of the Board.

VIII. Technology

The Agency should provide leadership and direction in the assessment, development and use of technology in all relevant areas of public education. Local school districts should be encouraged to explore, evaluate and utilize technological alternatives which provide educational opportunities for students.

II. THE COST OF THE RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS AND PRIORITY OF THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.

The Select Committee keenly recognizes that the public schools depend upon the hard-earned dollars of Texas taxpayers for their support. For this reason, the Select Committee considered carefully the cost of each of its recommendations before adopting any specific proposals. Accordingly, the estimated total cost (state and local) of each recommendation of the Select Committee is included in this report. Of course, many important recommendations do not require the expenditure of additional funds. For instance, freeing the school-nights for more homework does not require more money.

The Select Committee feels strongly that the recommendations contained in its report, when fully implemented, will accomplish the goal of placing Texas at the top of the academic charts. However, the timing of the implementation of these recommendations must come to grips with realistic constraints on available revenues that exist today in the State of Texas and the obligation of the state and the public schools to spend the scarce tax revenues allocated to education effectively and efficiently. Today, however, we do not have the management and accountability structure in place to do so, nor do we have the management, financial and cost accounting system in place today to specifically identify all of the ways we can trim the "fat" and reallocate the current educational expenditures to pay for these recommendations.

For these reasons, the Select Committee believes that it would be prudent to identify the recommendations that it believes should, and can, be effectively and efficiently implemented in the school-year commencing this September.

A key ingredient in accomplishing this objective is to simplify and improve the State school finance system and to fairly address the long-standing problem of equalization of our educational resources. At the same time, we must restructure and improve the management and accountability of the public school system for the results achieved. These steps, taken now, will bring tremendous benefits to us in the coming years in increased educational effectiveness and cost containment.

Of prime importance is the implementation of a career ladder for teachers so that we can substantially increase income opportunities for our most vital resource -- the classroom teachers. We will be seeking even more from these hard-working, dedicated people. Realistically, we can do this only by starting now to compensate the teachers as the professionals they are.

Finally, we must start now to build the finest elementary school system in the nation. This will require spending more of the education dollar at these levels; however, doing so will yield greater academic achievement and cost savings resulting from a reduction in the necessity for remediation programs.

By directing our efforts to these priorities first, we believe we can start the process of putting Texas at the top of the charts in academic achievement as early as 1984-1985 school-year in a manner that will be cost effective, efficient, and yield a greater return in academic achievement.

We cannot afford to stop our efforts in 1984-1985. At the same pace, we must proceed to implement the remaining recommendations in the years to come.

A. Total Additional Cost Per Year[1] (State and Local) of all Recommendations

(Based upon estimate dated March 27, 1984, as prepared by the staff of the comptroller)

Proposal	1985	Biennium	1986	1987	Biennium
1. Lengthen school-year by 10 days to 185 days (Operations Only)	$ 95.0	$ 95.0	$ 103.0	$ 111.4	$ 214.4
2. Extend the school-day two hours for enriching activities and tutorial assistance	303.0	303.0	348.2	400.0	748.2
3. Full-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds	246.3	246.3	321.6	410.9	732.5
4. Average class size of 15 students in grades 1-4	906.5	906.5	1,069.2	1,251.9	2,321.1
5. Annual testing with nationally-normed test	6.6	6.6	7.2	7.8	15.0
6. 4-year-old pre-kindergarten	402.7	402.7	472.8	553.6	1,026.4
7. 6-year textbook cycle	20.0	20.0	21.7	23.5	45.2
8. Parenthood education	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.9
9. Career ladder (teacher compensation)	359.9	359.9	877.4	1,304.4	2,181.8
10. Stipends for upgrading teachers	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.3
11. Increase coordinating Board formula (funding for teacher education programs)	74.8	74.8	81.1	87.7	168.8
12. Organization and Management Recommendations	6.7	6.7	-	-	-
TOTAL COST (State and Local) of Recommendations	$2,422.7	$2,422.7	$3,303.7	$4,152.9	$7,456.6

[1] Based upon proposed 185-day school year.

B. Cost* Per Year of the Recommendations as Prioritized for Phased Implementation

(Based upon estimates prepared by the staff of SCOPE in consultation with the staff of the Comptroller and the Commissioner of Education)

Proposal	1985	Biennium	1986	1987	Biennium	1988	1989	Biennium
1. Lengthen school-year by 5 days to 180 days (Operations Only)	$ 47.5	$ 47.5	$ 50.8	$ 55.1	$ 105.9	$ 59.8	$ 64.2	$ 123.8
2. Extend the school-day two hours for enriching activities and tutorial assistance	-	-	-	-	-	431.2	461.2	892.4
3. Full-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds	-	-	-	-	-	443.0	473.8	916.8
4. Limit (with appropriate exceptions) the class size for the:								
(a) 1st and 2nd grades to 20 pupils	120.8	120.8	129.1	140.0	269.1	151.3	163.1	314.4
(b) 3rd and 4th grades to 20 pupils	-	-	-	-	-	151.3	163.1	314.4
5. Annual testing for students with nationally-normed test	7.0	7.0	7.5	7.6	15.1	8.2	8.8	17.0
6. Voluntary 4-year-old pre-kindergarten for educationally disadvantaged students**	53.3	53.3	57.6	61.8	119.8	66.8	72.0	138.8
7. 6-year textbook cycle	-	-	21.7	23.5	45.2	25.4	27.2	52.6
8. Parenthood education	-	-	0.9	1.0	1.9	1.1	1.2	2.3
9. Career Ladder and Teacher Compensation***	350.0	350.0	400.0	450.0	850.0	475.0	500.0	975.0
10. Stipends for upgrading teachers	.5	.5	.6	.7	1.3	.8	.9	1.7
11. Increase coordinating Board formula (funding for teacher education programs)	-	-	-	-	-	94.6	101.2	195.8
12. Organization and Management Recommendations	6.7	6.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Teacher/Administrator Testing****	1.5	1.5	1.5	-	1.5	-	-	-
14. Implementation of simplified and equalized finance system*****	400.00	400.0	(See Footnote)					
15. Merit based scholar loan program	-	-	.25	.26	.51	.28	.30	.58
16. Research and development excellence fund	-	-	.25	.26	.51	.28	.30	.58
COST of Proposed Implementation	$987.3	$ 987.3	$669.6	$740.2	$1,409.8	$1,908.8	$2,037.3	$3,946.1

Continuation of B

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* The Committee has recommended many items that do not necessitate the expenditure of any additional funds. Therefore this schedule only lists those items which will require the expenditure of more money and that amount of money can be projected at this time. Items 9 and 14 reflect the projected state cost of such items while the remaining items reflect total cost, state and local.

** Based upon an estimate of 40,000 students.

*** To put this sum in context, the amount specified in 1985 would permit all FSP classroom teachers that receive a satisfactory performance evaluation and pass any applicable testing requirements to receive a salary for the school-year '84-'85 that is not less than an amount equal to 110% of the minimum salary to which they were entitled under the existing salary schedule; or, the SCOPE-recommended minimum starting salary of $1,520 per month, whichever is greater. In addition, you could set aside approximately $125 million to fund local district performance and evaluation-based programs which comply with State-required conceptual guidelines and are approved by the State Board.

**** Based upon an estimate of 170,000 teachers and administrators being tested.

***** Details of the Cost of Education Index pursuant to the finance principles adopted by SCOPE have not been completed; accordingly, this number represents a estimate, and it is not possible to extend that estimate to 1986-1987 at this time.